THE MINISTER OF MINORITY AFFAIRS (SHRI A.R. ANTULAY): (a) to (c) the Government had set up a High Level Committee (popularly known as Sachar Committee) on 9th March, 2005 to prepare a report on the social, economic and educational status of the Muslim community of India. A statement on the follow up action on the recommendations of the Sachar Committee has been laid on the Table of the House on 31.8.2007.

Further, Prime Minister's New 15-Point Programme for the Welfare of Minorities was announced in June, 2006. The 15 Point Programme is a policy statement of the Government regarding:

(i) enhancing opportunities for education.

(ii) ensuring an equitable share for minorities in economic activities and employment, through existing and new schemes, enhanced credit support for self-employment and recruitment to State and Central Government jobs.

(iii) improving the conditions of living of minorities by ensuring an appropriate share for them in infrastructure development schemes.

(iv) Prevention and control of communal disharmony and violence.

The programme envisages, wherever possible, earmarking of 15% of targets and outlays for the minorities under the schemes included in the programme and considered amenable to earmarking.

All these schemes and initiatives are directed towards improving the welfare of the minorities throughout the country including Muslims. These are applicable throughout the country, including Andhra Pradesh.

Educational programmes for minority communities

128. SHRI MOTIUR RAHMAN: Will the Minister of MINORITY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have formulated any programme to give education to minority communities, particularly muslims;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the quantum of budget allocated for the same?

THE MINISTER OF MINORITY AFFAIRS (SHRI A.R. ANTULAY): (a) to (c) Several educational schemes/programmes have been formulated for the minorities, including Muslims. Some of them are a merit-cum-means scholarship for technical and professional courses, a post-matric scholarship and a pre-matric scholarship scheme each for which suitable provisions have been made for 2007-08. In addition to these, the Maulana Azad Education Foundation implements educational schemes. Its corpus has been doubled to Rs. 200 crore and a provision of Rs. 50 crore has been made in 2007-08 to further enhance the corpus.

These exclusive schemes for the minorities are in addition to the schemes of the Ministry of Human Resource Development for augmenting the educational facilities for the minorities, particularly Muslims.